



TERRY M. BELLAMY
MAYOR

January 25, 2006

Dear Citizens,

The amount of participation we had at the *Goals for Asheville Forum* on Jan. 12 was a direct reflection of how much citizens care about our city. City Council was encouraged by the feedback and ideas shared at the forum, and we're looking forward to working with the community to turn ideas into action.

I want to personally thank each citizen who attended the forum and provided an active community voice during the process. I also want to thank the citizens who were unable to attend but submitted comments in writing. Your participation is essential to community collaboration, and every member of City Council appreciates your time and dedication.

Council reviewed the forum's results at our Jan. 20-21 retreat, and we are working to incorporate the community's feedback into our Strategic Operating Plan. An updated plan will be available by the end of February.

In the meantime, I'm proud to share the results of your work at the *Goals for Asheville Forum* in the attached report. It's exciting to see that many groups shared a common vision for shaping Asheville's future. At the forum, I told you it was my hope that we would come together to form one Asheville, and I believe these results are a tremendous step forward in that direction.

Again, thank you for your commitment to Asheville. Together, we are on our way to accomplishing great things for our community.

Sincerely,

Terry M. Bellamy
Mayor

Janet Rhodes

From: Terry Bellamy
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2006 9:33 AM
To: Janet Rhodes
Subject: Fw: Public Forum Input

Put in file for citizen input.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim Peck <timpeck@bellsouth.net>
To: mayorbellamy@ashevillenc.gov <mayorbellamy@ashevillenc.gov>
CC: Bill Lack <Bill_E_Lack@yahoo.com>; Kathie Lack <kathielack@tds.net>; Kathy Rhodarmer <rhodarmerx15@aol.com>; WHogan@ashevillenc.gov <WHogan@ashevillenc.gov>
Sent: Fri Jan 13 00:00:20 2006
Subject: Public Forum Input

City Council must find ways to eliminate barriers to job creation in Asheville.

Safety, security and uncertainty are key factors in the cost of doing business. Making Asheville a safe, secure and peaceful place in which workers and job-creating entrepreneurs and corporations can thrive depends largely on our ability to police crime and respond to disaster.

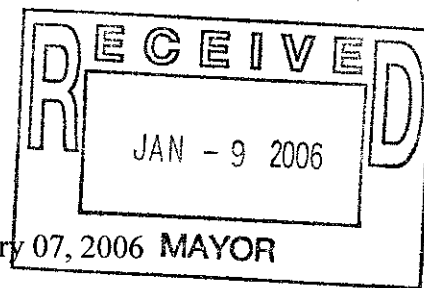
The risks of crime, fire and other hazards translate into an inhibiting atmosphere of high cost and uncertainty for businesses. Beautiful scenery, recreational opportunities and cultural variety are of little value when life, property, investments and livelihood are at risk because of insufficiently staffed first-responders.

Fully staffing police and fire departments should be City Council's top priority and its mission-critical objective for fiscal year 2006-7.

TIM PECK
BILL LACK
KATHY RHODARMER
KATHIE LACK



FOREST
MANOR
INN



January 07, 2006 MAYOR

Honorable Terry M. Bellamy, Mayor
Box 7148
Asheville NC 28802

Dear Mayor Bellamy,

Thank you for the invitation to the January 12 public meeting. Unfortunately I am scheduled to be out of town at that time, so will not be attending.

I would like to offer one suggestion regarding the visual maintenance of our streets and sidewalks:

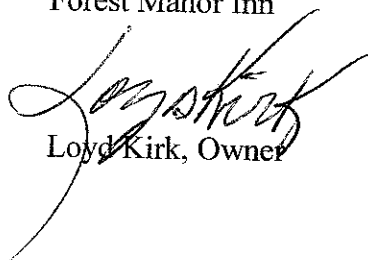
Emphasize the sweeping of our streets & gutters and the removal of sand, dirt, gravel and other foreign matter that is as ugly as homemade sin. Also emphasize weed control on side walks in the summer time.

These unsightly conditions exist on streets and sidewalks all over town and particularly on ramps leading to and from I-240, I-40 and I-26, making our beautiful city look unkempt and uncared for. Our homes and businesses don't look like this and in my humble opinion our streets and sidewalks should not either.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope that you have a very productive session on the 12th.

Sincerely,

Forest Manor Inn

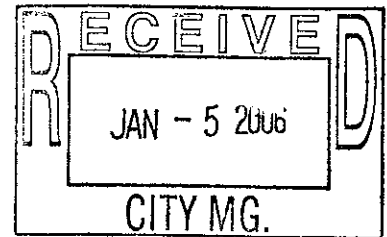

Lloyd Kirk, Owner

(Mayor's Copy)

To Asheville City Council, City Manager & Staff

December 2005

Subject: Wal-Mart: "The HIGH PRICE of low cost"
Can we afford another super Wal-Mart here?
Do we want another Wal-Mart here?



Greetings, To City Manager & Staff

I have many concerns about City Council permitting Wal-Mart to build another super store in Asheville. Wal-Mart's presence will change the character and face of our city and bring other long-term costs, including increased taxes and numerous economic and environmental impacts. How long will our small businesses be able to compete? How many net jobs will be lost? When will the tourist trade slow down? How about traffic and highway concerns? What about the displaced families in the trailer park, and in the three other homes? I request that City Council sanction a review committee to study the immediate impact, as well as the short and long-term effects of multiple Wal-Mart stores in Asheville. Please investigate the concerns other cities have, and what corrective or preventive action can or has been taken. We must also consider the effects on our city of the proposed Airport Road Wal-Mart and the proposed Weaverville Wal-Mart as well.

I ask that you provide opportunity for public comment in a venue that is large enough to accommodate all who wish to speak or to listen, and at multiple times so workers on different shifts can participate. Wal-Mart is in a class different from other stores like K-Mart or Roses, and needs to be treated appropriately.

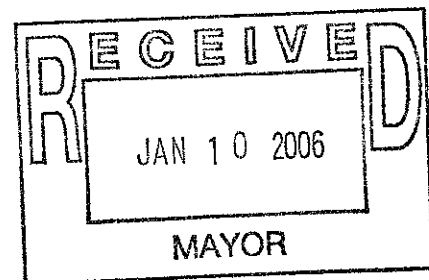
Please take some time to see what we are really up against, and act with courage. Enclosed is information on some of the many, many lawsuits pending against Wal-Mart, and of the guilty sentences for multiple violations and problems the Wal-Mart Corporation has created. The ethical, economic & environmental impact of Wal-Mart in our community will affect all of us. Please review the enclosed information and visit the website: WalMartWatch.com for more detailed information. Take the time to watch the enclosed DVD: "Wal-Mart "The HIGH PRICE of low cost"

As a life-long Asheville resident, (sixth generation with family in WNC since 1723), I want to preserve our town's character as a place where small businesses can flourish and provide employment for our citizens. Can we afford another Wal-Mart? I don't think so. I ask council to vote NO to the proposed West Asheville Wal-Mart.

Thank you for your attention and for protecting Asheville,

~ Jim

~Jim Brown
PO Box 1464
Asheville, NC 28802
(828)-777-4433



**Please
Watch**

Enclosed: DVD: "Wal-Mart "The HIGH PRICE of low cost" + 16 Pages

✓ Sent to Planning w/ this letter
for case file. 1-10-06

Index to Attachments - 16 additional pages:

- A. Reasons to Vote NO
- B. Cover Sheet
- C. FACTS: Wages, Health Care, Tax Breaks
- D. FACTS: Women , Ethics (**Pass legislation not allowing any stores with lawsuits pending.**)
- E. FACTS: Environment, Outsourcing
- F. FACTS: Human Rights, Union Organizing, Disabled workers violations
- G. FACTS: continued
- H. Knoxville TV 6 News report: State Senator cites state Health cost
- I. Economics: Local stores out of business, Iowa statistics
- J. Wal-Mart Expansion into travel, publishing, banking
- K. No union activity allowed, Ethics: workers forced to work with no pay
- L. Discrimination in hiring
- M. Discrimination against women
- N. Governments fight Wal-Mart over Health care policy
- O. Idaho House Speaker on Wal-Mart Health cost to taxpayers
- P. Real Costs to Taxpayers: Devastated small towns, Bankrupt local small businesses, Increase overall unemployment, Drain taxpayers, Strain public programs, Pressure on competitors, ...
- Q. Letter from Wal-Mart Senior Manager to Cleveland City Council Pres.

HELP! SAVE US FROM WAL-MART - The World's Largest Corporation

"As long as we remain blind to those consequences [of Wal-Mart practices], we will also remain blind to the cost we pay..." - - - - - "The United States of Wal-Mart" by John Dicker

~ Jim

WALMARTWATCH

SHAMELESS

HOW WAL-MART BULLIES ITS WAY INTO
COMMUNITIES ACROSS AMERICA

A WAL-MART WATCH SPECIAL REPORT



Top Ten Most Egregious Wal-Mart Business Practices

1. WAGES: Wal-Mart Pay is Substandard, Hits Poverty Level

Wal-Mart Associates Earn \$2.60 Less per Hour than the Average American Retail Worker. According to data reported by the New York Times, hourly wages at Wal-Mart are \$9.68. This amount is \$2.60 per hour less than the average hourly wage of retail workers, which is \$12.28. Costco, for example, pays its hourly workers \$16.00. [New York Times, 5/3/05]

Wal-Mart Sales Clerk Pay Cannot Support a Family of Three. According to the Century Foundation's Simon Head, at the end of 2004, "the average pay of a sales clerk at Wal-Mart was \$8.50 per hour or about \$14,000 per year - \$1,000 below the government's definition of the poverty level for a family of three." [New York Review of Books, Head, "Inside the Leviathan," 12/16/04]

At \$8,424 Per Hour, Wal-Mart CEO's Salary Dwarfs Compensation of Average Worker. Wal-Mart's President and CEO H. Lee Scott earned 17.5 million in total compensation in 2004. That amount is twice as much as the average for leading CEO's. Lee's average hourly pay is \$8,434, far more than the average Wal-Mart worker's wage of \$9.68 per hour. [Wal-Mart Proxy Statement, <http://www.walmartstores.com>; Business Week, 4/18/05; Institute for Policy Studies, "Wal-Mart Pay Gap"]

2. HEALTH CARE: Wal-Mart Offers Inadequate Benefits

Wal-Mart Covers Few of Its Employees. According to a recent report by the New York Times, only 48 percent of Wal-Mart's workers receive their health insurance from the company's plan. In contrast, Costco covers 82 percent of its workers under the company plan. [New York Times, 5/4/05]

Wal-Mart Offers Unaffordable Health Care Coverage. Wal-Mart provides health-care options to their employees and families that have a deductible of \$1,000. Wal-Mart employees must endure long waits to qualify for benefits: six months for full-time employees and two years for part-time employees. [Philadelphia Inquirer, 5/16/05; Cox News Service, 2/27/04]

Wal-Mart Spending on Health Benefits Falls Below Industry, National Levels. According a Harvard Business School case study, "In 2002, Wal-Mart spending on health benefits for the 500,000 employees covered in the United States averaged an estimated \$3,500 per employee, versus the \$4,800 for the wholesale/retailing sector and \$5,600 for U.S. employers in general." [Ghemawat, et. al., "Wal-Mart Stores in 2003," Harvard Business School, Case Study 9-704-430, 1/30/04]

3. TAX BREAKS: Wal-Mart Relies on Public Assistance to Finance its Ventures

Taxpayers Face an Increasing Burden Due To Wal-Mart's Poor Labor Practices. Wal-Mart does not pay its employees sufficient wages, despite its enormous profits, and as a result, citizens from every state must pick up Wal-Mart's bills. According to study conducted by the House Education and Workforce Committee's Democratic staff, a typical Wal-Mart store employing 200 people cost the American taxpayer \$420,750 a year. Based on the 3,702 Wal-Mart stores as of January 2005, taxpayers subsidize Wal-Mart by an estimated \$1.5 million annually. The actual amount may far exceed the estimated \$1.5 billion, as the House figure did not include subsidies like TANF, Medicaid, or the federal energy assistance program LiHEAP. [<http://edworkforce.house.gov/democrats/WALMARTREPORT.pdf>]

Wal-Mart Builds its Stores with Over \$1 billion in Public Subsidies. Despite \$10 billion in profit in 2004 alone, Wal-Mart relies on state and local governments to provide tax breaks and to pay for roads and utility connections at many of its new stores and distribution centers. A May 2004 report by Good Jobs First documented that Wal-Mart has received more than \$1 billion from at least 244 taxpayer-funded subsidies. [Mattera and Purinton, Good Jobs First, "Shopping for Subsidies," May 2004, <http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/pdf/wmtstudy.pdf>]

Wal-Mart Employees are Stranded on Public Assistance. Lawmakers and community members across the nation object to the practice of Wal-Mart employees having to depend on taxpayer-funded programs like Medicaid and CHIP. For example, the state of Georgia reported that over 10,000 children were on the state's PeachCare health program had a parent working at Wal-Mart. In California, the state government pays \$32 million a year providing health benefits to Wal-Mart employees. [Dollars & Sense, 1/1/05; Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2/27/04; Dube and Jacobs, "Hidden Cost of Wal-Mart Jobs: Use of Safety Net Programs By Workers in California," UC Berkeley Labor Center, 8/2/04]

4. **WOMEN: Employees Accuse Wal-Mart of Systematic Discrimination**

Wal-Mart Facing Lawsuit for Refusing to Pay and Promote Female Employees as they do Men. Wal-Mart is facing a historic class-action lawsuit including 1.6 million current and former female employees for gender discrimination. In 2003, Dr. Richard Drogin, Professor Emeritus from California State University, conducted a study on the wages of female employees at Wal-Mart. Among his key findings:

- Women hourly workers earned up to 37 cents less per hour than their male counterparts.
- Female managers earn nearly \$5,000 less than male managers in yearly salary.
- Women comprise 72 percent of Wal-Mart's total workforce, but only 33 percent of its managers.
- Women comprise 92 percent of Wal-Mart's cashiers, but only 14 percent of Wal-Mart Store Managers. [The Impact Fund, <http://www.walmartclass.com>; New York Times, 12/30/04]

5. **ETHICS: Wal-Mart's Original Sam Walton Ethic Eroding With Grand Jury Investigation, Whistleblower Complaints**

Wal-Mart's Former Chairman Under Investigation by Grand Jury for Ethical Lapses. In April 2005, a grand jury was named to investigate fraud allegation surrounding former Wal-Mart Vice Chairman Thomas M. Coughlin. Wal-Mart contends that Coughlin misappropriated up to \$500,000 in funds for personal expenses. The Wall Street Journal reported that Coughlin has said the money was used to fund a top-secret antiunion effort to pay off union employees and gather information. Coughlin began his career in 1978 and was a friend and hunting partner of founder Sam Walton. As a way of distancing themselves from Coughlin, Wal-Mart announced in June 2005 that it was retroactively terminating his employment, thus negating his lucrative retirement package. [Wall Street Journal, 4/8/05; New York Times, 4/23/05; Los Angeles Times, 6/11/05]

Wal-Mart Executive Filed for Whistleblower Protection After Launching Probe and Subsequently Being Fired. Jared Bowen, a former Wal-Mart Vice President, filed for whistleblower protection because he says that Wal-Mart fired him after reporting questionable payments requested by former Wal-Mart Vice Chairman Thomas Coughlin. In 2004, Coughlin repeatedly asked Bowen to approve expenses without a receipt and to obtain "unauthorized" Wal-Mart gift cards. Bowen says that Wal-Mart initially applauded him for coming forward about Coughlin's requests, but later terminated him. "I believe they were trying to clean house of everybody that

E

was associated with or knew about this," Bowen said. [Associated Press, 6/11/05; Wall Street Journal, 4/8/05; 4/28/05; Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, 4/22/05]

6. ENVIRONMENT: Wal-Mart Disrespects Our Communities

➤ **Wal-Mart Fined \$3.1 Million In 2004 For Environmental Violations In Nine States.** The U.S. Justice Department in 2004 levied \$3.1 million in fines to Wal-Mart. The fines stemmed from environmental violations – namely excessive storm water runoff at construction sites – at 24 of its sites in nine states. In the settlement, federal officials accused Wal-Mart of failing to get required permits, not instituting a runoff control plan, and failing to install controls to prevent discharges. The nine states are California, Colorado, Delaware, Michigan, New Jersey, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Utah. [Associated Press, 5/12/04; New York Times, 4/13/05]

Wal-Mart Settled Case Involving Air Pollution in Eleven States "Wal-Mart Stores Inc. agreed Jan. 22 to pay \$400,000 to settle claims that its Sam's Club stores violated federal air pollution regulations in 11 states, including Missouri. U.S. Attorney Todd Graves filed suit in Kansas City federal court, charging Wal-Mart with 20 Clean Air Act violations." [The Business Journal, 1/30/04]

➤ **Wal-Mart Fined \$765,000 for Petroleum Storage Violations.** Wal-Mart was levied \$765,000 in fines for violating Florida's petroleum storage tank law at its automobile service centers. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection said that Wal-Mart failed to register its fuel tanks with the state and failed to install devices that prevent overflows, among other problems. As well, Wal-Mart also did not perform monthly monitoring, lacked current technologies to prevent overflows, blocked state inspectors from reviewing maintenance records, and failed to submit proper insurance documentation. [Associated Press, 11/18/04]

7. OUTSOURCING: Wal-Mart has Abandoned Jobs at Home, "Buy America"

THEN: In The 1980s, Wal-Mart Launched A "Buy American" Program. In 1985, under founder Sam Walton, Wal-Mart began a "Buy American" program. According to a company release, the retailer "asked American manufacturers and suppliers to mutually consider a 'Buy American' plan of producing and buying U.S. products to help reduce the balance of trade deficit." Sam Walton said, "Our company is firmly committed to the philosophy by buying everything possible from suppliers who manufacture their products in the United States.... We must insure that American manufacturers continue to be the entrepreneurs that provide the fuel that drives our economy." [Wal-Mart Release, 3/13/85]

NOW: "Virtually Every Aisle": At Least Seventy Percent of Wal-Mart Merchandise Manufactured In China. From toys to apparel to housewares and across their shelves, Wal-Mart "stocks its shelves" with merchandise manufactured in China. According to Ted Fishman, author of China, Inc., "...there's a Chinese component in virtually every aisle you walk there in Wal-Mart and Wal-Mart is the conduit for all of the output of the Chinese economy directly into American lives." Fishman also notes, "...70 percent of the things sold in Wal-Mart stores have a Chinese component to them." In addition, a stock analyst for Gladstone Capital notes that figure is even higher, saying, "They have about 70 percent of their products coming from China, not including the food products." The "Buy American" program has virtually vanished, as "its shelves bear little trace of the 'Buy American' philosophy of its founder," notes the Washington Post. [CNN, 2/16/05; NPR, 2/12/05; Pittsburgh Tribune Review, 3/27/05; Gladstone Capital Quarterly Shareholders Call, 2/10/05; Washington Post, 10/29/03]

F

Economist Suggests Over A Million Jobs Lost To China Since 1990s. Larry Mishel, President of the Economic Policy Institute, said, "When you look at the growth of the trade deficit with China, you could say that a very conservative estimate is that we have lost more than a million jobs to China since the early 1990s." [PBS Frontline, 2004]

8. HUMAN RIGHTS: Wal-Mart Cited for Repeated and Extreme Violations

After 13 Years And Numerous Violations, Wal-Mart Has Failed Do Anything About Sweatshops Around The World. In 1992, NBC's *Dateline* broke a story about an 11-year-old worker from Bangladesh who was making t-shirts for Wal-Mart. As an angry public began to pressure their organization, Wal-Mart promised to reform its ways but they failed repeatedly. Even after exposing Kathy Lee Gifford's Wal-Mart clothing line for human rights violations, executives have made no significant changes. In 2000, The National Labor Committee reported that factory supervisors forced workers at Qin Shi Handbag factory in Zhongshan, China to work 14-hour shifts, seven days a week for little or no money. [*New York Times*, 12/24/92; *Washington Post*, 5/30/96; National Labor Committee, "Made in China: The Role of U.S. Companies in Denying Human and Worker Rights."]

Wal-Mart Kicked Off Top Socially Responsible Investing Index for Sweatshop Toleration. In 2001, Wal-Mart was removed from the nation's largest "socially responsible" mutual fund, the Domini 400 Social Index, because of its human rights standards. The Domini Index is described as the "the first benchmark for stock funds to screen for social responsibility". Kyle Johnson, the project manager for the index, stated "Wal-Mart is a market leader in retail, yet has not taken a leadership position on labor issues and has been unresponsive to calls for change from shareholders... Given that we had removed Nike for similar reasons back in 1997, we could not justify keeping Wal-Mart." [*Palm Beach Daily News*, 6/12/05; *International Shareholder*, 4/17/01; *Los Angeles Times*, 5/18/01]

9. ORGANIZING: Wal-Mart Undermines Workers' Rights

Wal-Mart Willing Break the Law To Prevent Unions From Entering Their Stores. Wal-Mart has been willing to break labor laws in part because penalties are not harsh enough. Managers and executives do not face prison time and Wal-Mart's \$10 billion in profit ensure that it has enough money to pay fines. A Wal-Mart handbook to its managers clearly states, "You...are expected to support the company's position.... This may mean walking a tightrope between legitimate campaigning and improper conduct." [*The Nation*, 6/10/04; *Fortune*, 4/4/05]

One Pro-Union Vote Led Wal-Mart To Eliminate Departments Throughout Country. In February 2000, ten butchers at a Wal-Mart in Jacksonville, Texas voted to create the company's first unionized shop. Rather than allow the vote to stand, Wal-Mart announced 2 weeks later that it would eliminate meat cutters jobs at 180 stores in the region that year and would follow by eliminating the job in all stores. In 2005, after a Wal-Mart store in Quebec, Canada voted to unionize, Wal-Mart closed the store. [Associated Press, 3/3/00; *Investor's Business Daily*, 5/24/05]

10. Disabled Workers Accuse Wal-Mart of Mistreatment

Wal-Mart Pays Millions To Settle Slew Of Americans with Disabilities Act Violations. In 2001, Wal-Mart paid \$6 million dollars to settle 13 lawsuits, which alleged widespread discrimination. The litigation was supposed to change the hiring practices and procedures of Wal-Mart but it failed to do so. [29 U.S.C. § 706 et seq; <http://edworkforce.house.gov/democrats/WALMARTREPORT.pdf>]

G

Even after settling these lawsuits in 2001, Wal-Mart continued to discriminate against Americans with disabilities. In 2004, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had to file another lawsuit on behalf of a Kansas City man confined to a wheelchair. [Business Journal, 1/20/04]

Former Wal-Mart Employee Suing Under Americans with Disabilities Act for Wrong Termination. In Florida, former Wal-Mart employee Molly Beavers is suing Wal-Mart under the Americans with Disabilities Act for discrimination. According to the St. Petersburg Times, "A Sam's Club manager fired her [Beavers] in December 2003 for not smiling enough, she says. Beavers' face is partially paralyzed from surgery related to her condition as an achondroplastic dwarf." [St. Petersburg Times, 6/14/05]

Should Wal-Mart Share Blame For TennCare Crisis?

By Amelia Graham

6 News Reporter, 0720/05

KNOXVILLE (WATE) -- During WATE's TennCare town hall meeting Tuesday night, state Sen. Tim Burchett (R-Knoxville) said Wal-Mart shares some of the blame for the TennCare crisis.

"A large percentage of their employees are on TennCare and I'd like to see them use some of their profits to support some of their people, and things like that," Burchett said.

Wal-Mart was quick to defend its health insurance plan for employees.

It's unclear how many of Wal-Mart's 39,000 employees in Tennessee are on TennCare. A recent newspaper survey showed that one out of every four Wal-Mart associates in Tennessee is on TennCare. That's approximately 9,800 people.

Wal-Mart disputes the data used in the survey.

Scotty Hurst is a full-time employee at Wal-Mart who is covered by TennCare. He suffers from epilepsy. He must see a doctor regularly and take medicine.

Now that he's worked there six months he's eligible for the company healthcare plan.

"But by looking at my budget and everything, it's kind of hard for me to get it," he said. "I pay rent, you know. I live on my own"

Scotty told 6 News he's not worried because TennCare pays his medical bills.

6 News talked with a company spokesman several times Wednesday. He issued a statement: saying, "The company does not encourage associates to apply for public assistance, nor does Wal-Mart design plans to be subsidized by it."

But what about Scotty? Remember, he was already on TennCare. Does Wal-Mart encourage its employees to stay on public assistance, as opposed to enrolling in the company's plan?

"I was wanting to, but since I've already got it, they say it's the same thing," Scotty said.

Wal-Mart maintains its healthcare plan is affordable for both full and part-time employees.

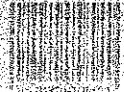
Wal-Mart says its average associate in Tennessee makes \$9.68 an hour.

G

Even after settling these lawsuits in 2001, Wal-Mart continued to discriminate against Americans with disabilities. In 2004, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had to file another lawsuit on behalf of a Kansas City man confined to a wheelchair. [Business Journal, 1/20/04]

Former Wal-Mart Employee Suing Under Americans with Disabilities Act for Wrong Termination. In Florida, former Wal-Mart employee Molly Beavers is suing Wal-Mart under the Americans with Disabilities Act for discrimination. According to the St. Petersburg Times, "A Sam's Club manager fired her [Beavers] in December 2003 for not smiling enough, she says. Beavers' face is partially paralyzed from surgery related to her condition as an achondroplastic dwarf." [St. Petersburg Times, 6/14/05]

HIGHER EXPECTATIONS WEEK: NOVEMBER 13-19, 2005

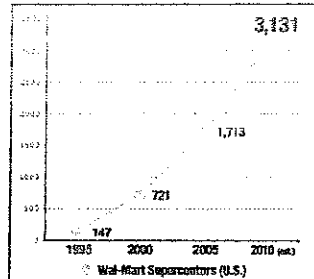


WAL-MART'S UNCHECKED GROWTH: MORE STORES. MORE MARKETS. LESS ACCOUNTABILITY.

2010: DOUBLE TROUBLE IN NEXT FIVE YEARS

As the world's largest corporation, Wal-Mart – with billions in its deep pockets and an insatiable hunger for growth – behaves shamelessly in the way it forces itself on American communities. Its aggressive bullying of American communities occurs because Wal-Mart's growth is central to its business model; it has to grow to sustain its profits. \$10 billion in 2004 alone.

As of 2005, Wal-Mart had 1,713 Supercenter stores, and is projected to have 3,131 in operation by 2010. 950 new Supercenters have already been approved through the company's internal planning process. — *Women's Wear Daily*, 6/20/05

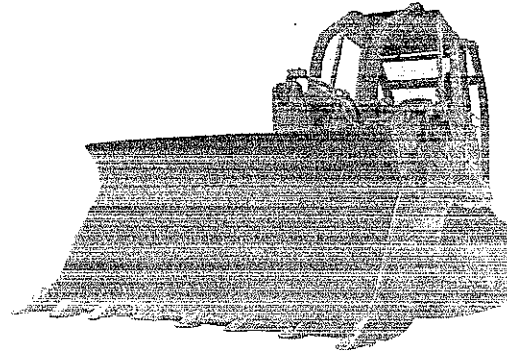


"If you have one takeaway from this meeting I hope it is our growth has just begun," Wal-Mart CFO Tom Schoewe at the 2005 annual shareholders meeting. — *DSN Retailing Today*, 6/13/05

COMING SOON: TRAVEL, PUBLISHING, BANKING

Wal-Mart is aggressively expanding beyond traditional retail; here are some of the business services that Wal-Mart is now providing or considering: air travel, banking, rental cars and publishing. — *Women's Wear Daily*, 6/20/05

Wal-Mart applied to federal regulators to exploit a loophole in current banking law that would allow the giant retailer to open its own bank. Experts oppose Wal-Mart's application because it could lead to "conflicts of interest between the financial and commercial arms of Wal-Mart's operations." One concern is that the company could make loans to its low-income shoppers to spend in their stores, even if there were doubts about customers' abilities to repay. — *American Banker*, 8/30/05



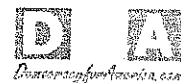
"Wal-Mart will leave massive paths of destruction in its wake," said Al Meyers, Senior Vice President, business development for Retail Forward, Inc. — *Progressive Grocer*, 5/20/05

ABOUT WAL-MART WATCH

Along with over 300 supporting organizations, Wal-Mart Watch is sponsoring Higher Expectations Week to highlight our campaign to reform Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart Watch is committed to uncovering the true impacts of Wal-Mart's business practices on our economy, environment and culture. We aim to make Wal-Mart a more responsible company by informing, motivating and supporting the work of consumers, workers, community activists and elected officials who, together, will demand reform in their hometown. Join us at www.walmartwatch.com.



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892



SOJOURNERS

BRAVE NEW FILMS

*A small sample of our national and local partners

YOU DO!

LEARN THE FACTS: Read more about Wal-Mart's aggressive expansion in our special report, "Shameless," at www.walmartwatch.com.

SPEAK OUT: Write your state legislator to demand Wal-Mart stops bullying local communities.

ORGANIZE: Join the growing movement to hold Wal-Mart accountable for their greed and destructive impact on our communities, economy and culture.

WAL-MART WATCH

1730 M Street NW, Suite 600 • Washington DC 20036 • WalmartWatch.com



WAL-MART & LOCAL ECONOMIES: BIG BOX GIANT BUSTS TOWNS ACROSS AMERICA.

➤ Local businesses are known for their better service and higher quality merchandise, but too often cannot compete against Wal-Mart's harmful low-pricing scheme.

➤ PUTTING LOCAL STORES OUT OF BUSINESS

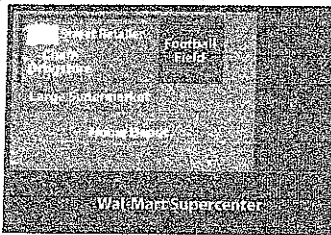
Industry analyst, Retail Forward, predicted that for every new Supercenter that Wal-Mart opens, two local supermarkets will close.

— *Business Week*, "Is Wal-Mart Too Powerful?," 10/06/03

• Wal-Mart has received more than \$1 billion in taxpayer-funded subsidies from state and local communities.

— *Good Jobs First*, "Shopping for Subsidies," May '04
www.goodjobsfirst.org

➤ HOW BIG IS TOO BIG?



One study found that local businesses spend 53% of their revenues within the local and state economies; whereas big box stores, like Wal-Mart, spend just 14% within the local economy.

— *Inst. for Local Self-Reliance*, 9/03

Source: New Rules Project, www.newrules.org/retail

➤ SNAPSHOT: IOWA

A study of the impact of Wal-Mart's growth found that over ten years 7,326 Iowa businesses closed, including: 555 grocery stores, 298 hardware stores, 293 building suppliers, 161 variety shops, 158 women's stores, and 116 pharmacies.

— *Dr. Kenneth Stone, Iowa State University*, "Competing with Discount Mass Merchandisers," 1995

A study of Wal-Mart's expansion in Iowa found that 84 percent of all sales at the new Wal-Mart stores came at the expense of existing businesses within the same county.

— *National Trust For Historic Preservation*, "What Happened When Wal-Mart Came to Town?," 1996



"People have said to me: 'When Wal-Mart arrives, they hit the town with the force of 100 new businesses opening at once.' The demise of smaller, independent businesses in Iowa suggests that the 'retail hurricane' theory is true.

— *Al Norman, www.sprawibusters.com*

ABOUT WAL-MART WATCH

Along with over 300 supporting organizations, Wal-Mart Watch is sponsoring Higher Expectations Week to highlight our campaign to reform Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart Watch is committed to uncovering the true impacts of Wal-Mart's business practices on our economy, environment and culture. We aim to make Wal-Mart a more responsible company by informing, motivating and supporting the work of consumers, workers, community activists and elected officials who, together, will demand reform in their hometown. Join us at www.walmartwatch.com/november



SIERRA CLUB
ESTABLISHED 1912



SOJOURNERS

BRAVE NEW FILMS

*A small sample of our national and local partners

YOU DO!

LEARN THE FACTS: What does Wal-Mart cost you? Visit our website at www.walmartwatch.com

SPEAK OUT: Tell your friends and family about the negative impact of Wal-Mart's business model.

ORGANIZE: Join the growing movement to hold Wal-Mart accountable for their greed and destructive impact on our communities, economy and culture.

WAL-MART WATCH

1730 W. Street NW, Suite 601 • Washington, DC 20036 • WalmartWatch.com

DISCRIMINATION: EXPOSING DISCRIMINATION AT WAL-MART AMERICA'S LARGEST EMPLOYER

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AFRICAN-AMERICANS

Wal-Mart is facing allegations of discrimination in its hiring of truck drivers. Nationally, 15% of truck drivers are African-American, yet at Wal-Mart African-Americans comprise only 2-3% of its fleet, which employs 7,800 truck drivers.

— *New York Times*, 7/14/05, 2005 Wal-Mart Annual Report

Minority customers have sued Wal-Mart Stores saying they were racially profiled while shopping at its stores. The lawsuit says at least 9 customers were followed, searched, humiliated, and in some cases, detained by employees. — *Boston Globe*, 7/13/05

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

In the largest class-action lawsuit in history, 1.6 million current and former female employees are suing Wal-Mart for gender discrimination. — *New York Times*, 6/23/04

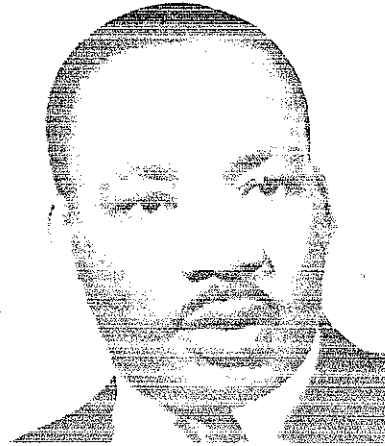
Women comprise 92% of Wal-Mart's cashiers, but only 14% of Wal-Mart's store managers. — *Impact Fund*

Overall, women earned about \$5,200 less than men, on the average, in 2001. Within the hourly workforce, women earned about \$1,100 less than men, and about \$14,500 less among management employees, in 2001. — *Impact Fund*

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In 2001, Wal-Mart agreed to pay \$6.8 million to settle 13 lawsuits in 11 states that were filed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, alleging widespread discrimination against people with disabilities. — *Los Angeles Times*, 12/18/01

In 2005, after Wal-Mart settled yet another discrimination case, the EEOC announced it was opening a new investigation into the company to see if it has violated the terms of the 2001 settlement. "Over the years, we've had complaints [about Wal-Mart], but some of the stuff we're now seeing bears looking into," EEOC attorney Mary J. O'Neill said. — *Washington Post*, 7/29/05



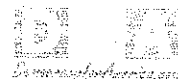
"I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits." — Martin Luther King, 12/10/64

ABOUT WAL-MART WATCH

Along with over 300 supporting organizations, Wal-Mart Watch is sponsoring Higher Expectations Week to highlight our campaign to reform Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart Watch is committed to uncovering the true impacts of Wal-Mart's business practices on our economy, environment and culture. We aim to make Wal-Mart a more responsible company by informing, motivating and supporting the work of consumers, workers, community activists and elected officials who, together, will demand reform in their hometown. Join us at www.walmartwatch.com/november



SIERRA CLUB
THE NEW LEFT



SOJOURNERS

BRA NEW

*A small sample of our national and local partners

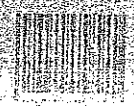
YOU DO!

LEARN THE FACTS: What does Wal-Mart cost you? Visit our website at www.walmartwatch.com.

SPEAK OUT: Contact jjohnson@walmartwatch.com for sample sermons or other educational material.

ORGANIZE: Join the growing movement to hold Wal-Mart accountable for their greed and destructive impact on our communities, economy and culture.

WAL-MART WATCH



K

WORKERS: WAL-MART, AMERICA'S LARGEST EMPLOYER SHORTCHANGES WORKERS

ROLLING BACK WORKERS' RIGHTS

Wal-Mart mobilizes its incredible power to block union organizing efforts at all costs, sometimes in blatant violation of federal labor law.

In California, Wal-Mart is facing a lawsuit filed on behalf of 115,919 current and former employees who were systematically and illegally denied meal breaks while working for the company. — *Bloomberg News*, 9/19/05; *Associated Press*, 9/19/05

In 2000, Wal-Mart closed its company-wide meat-cutting division after ten butchers in Texas voted to unionize their shop. Wal-Mart closed a profitable Canadian store in 2004 after employees chose union representation. — *Associated Press*, 3/3/00; 2/09/05

Wal-Mart [reportedly] paid \$50 million to settle a lawsuit that involved 69,000 workers in Colorado who had allegedly been forced to work off the clock. In recent years, Wal-Mart has faced legal actions in over thirty states for overtime violations. — *New York Times*, 11/19/04

RHETORIC VS. REALITY

Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott: "The truth is our wages are really competitive and they're good."

— *Lee Scott, Fox News*, 1/13/05

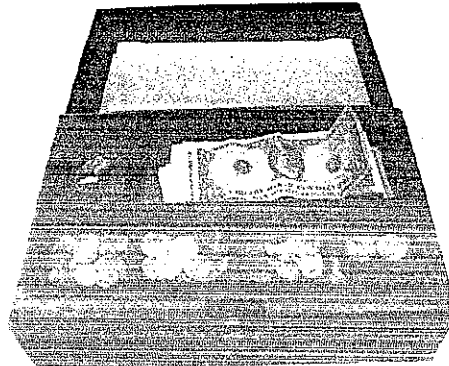
Wal-Mart's CEO Lee Scott took home \$17.5 million in 2004, which equals \$8,434 an hour. An average Wal-Mart associate earns just \$9.68 an hour. — *Institute for Policy Studies*

The average pay for a Wal-Mart sales associate is \$14,000 a year \$1,000 below the poverty line for a family of three.

— *New York Review of Books*, 12/16/04

On average, Costco pays its workers 65% more than Wal-Mart, yet earns more profits per employee.

— *New York Times*, 5/3/05; *Business Week*, 4/12/04



"The message to employees is clear: exercise your right to unionize and you'll end up in the unemployment line."

— *Wal-Mart Watch 2004 Annual Report*

ABOUT WAL-MART WATCH

Along with over 300 supporting organizations, Wal-Mart Watch is sponsoring Higher Expectations Week to highlight our campaign to reform Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart Watch is committed to uncovering the true impacts of Wal-Mart's business practices on our economy, environment and culture. We aim to make Wal-Mart a more responsible company by informing, motivating and supporting the work of consumers, workers, community activists and elected officials who, together, will demand reform in their hometown. Join us at www.walmartwatch.com/november



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892



D A
DancewayforAmerica.com



SOJOURNERS

BRAVE NEW
FILMS

*A small sample of our national and local partners.

YOU DO!

LEARN THE FACTS: What does Wal-Mart cost you? Visit our website at www.walmartwatch.com.

SPEAK OUT: Write your state legislator to demand Wal-Mart stops short changing America's workers.

ORGANIZE: Join the growing movement to hold Wal-Mart accountable for their greed and destructive impact on our communities, economy and culture.

WAL-MART WATCH

2005-2006 National Campaign, 11/13-11/19/05, Washington DC, 2005-2006, WalmartWatch.com

Health
Care Cost
Taxpayers

Republican Legislators Challenge Wal-Mart on Employee Health Insurance

It is well known that Wal-Mart stores shortchanges its employees with low-quality, high-cost health insurance coverage. Not surprisingly, less than 50 percent of Wal-Mart employees are covered by the company plan. To date, fifteen states have conducted studies which found large numbers of Wal-Mart employees and their family members relying on taxpayer funded programs to provide health insurance. Republican lawmakers are taking notice and challenging Wal-Mart to change its policies.

"There are government assistance programs out there that are so lucrative it's hard to be competitive, and it's expensive to be competitive,"

-- A galling statement from Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott [St. Louis Post Dispatch, 04/06/05]

IDAHO: House Speaker Demands Disclosure, Says Wal-Mart Actions on Health Insurance are "Really Wrong." "House Speaker Bruce Newcomb is making noise about taking on Wal-Mart because he thinks the company relies on taxpayer subsidies to support underpaid workers. A bill that would have taxed Wal-Mart for what lawmakers said were substandard health plans was vetoed May 19 by Maryland Gov. Robert Ehrlich, who had Wal-Mart's chief operating officer at his side for the veto ceremony. Newcomb, who helped Albertsons win a key tax break this year, said he's looking at the Maryland bill for two reasons: The fiscal impact on Idaho and what he sees as an issue of fairness to companies like Albertsons, which pay far more generous wages and benefits. 'Wal-Mart's blowing people out of the water, and if they're doing that by having the public sector subsidize their health care, that's wrong,' Newcomb said. 'That's really wrong.' Newcomb, R-Burley, said he will ask the Department of Health and Welfare to study Wal-Mart workers' share of Medicaid." [Idaho Statesman, 6/29/05]

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Senate Majority Leader Working to Stop Wal-Mart Model of Stranding In New Hampshire Senate Majority Leader Robert Clegg criticized news that Wal-Mart employees topped the state's list of workers relying on the publicly funded Healthy Kids program. The Associated Press reported, "Clegg, a conservative Republican, believes businesses are shirking their responsibility to provide health care because they know taxpayers will pick up the tab. 'Business has looked at it as a method of reducing overhead,' he said. Clegg is looking at reform proposals that would minimize public health insurance coverage substituting private coverage. [Associated Press, 5/15/05]

TENNESSEE: State Senator Called on Wal-Mart to Use Profit to Remove Employees from Medicaid. Republican State Senator questioned Wal-Mart's health care policy during town hall meeting debating a crisis in Tennessee's Medicaid program (TennCare). "State Sen. Tim Burchett (R-Knoxville) said Wal-Mart shares some of the blame for the TennCare crisis. 'A large percentage of their [Wal-Mart's] employees are on TennCare and I'd like to see them use some of their profits to support some of their people, and things like that,' Burchett said." [http://www.wate.com/Global/story.asp?S=3620295]

HIGHER EXPECTATIONS WEEK: NOVEMBER 13-19, 2005

WAL-MART & WOMEN: SEEN, SHORTCHANGED AND SILENCED

WAL-MART DISCRIMINATES AGAINST WOMEN

In the largest class-action lawsuit in history, 1.6 million current and former female employees are suing Wal-Mart for gender discrimination. — *New York Times*, 6/23/04

Women comprise 92% of Wal-Mart's cashiers, but only 14% of Wal-Mart's store managers.

— *Dukes v. Wal-Mart*, walmartclass.com

"Overall, women earned about \$5,200 less than men, on average, in 2001. Within the hourly workforce, women earned about \$1,100 less than men, and about \$14,500 less among management employees, in 2001."

— *Dukes v. Wal-Mart*, walmartclass.com

Wal-Mart was fined \$188,000 by the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission for refusing to reinstate a woman after she completed her maternity leave.

— *Sacramento Bee*, 6/14/05

Wal-Mart's health insurance does not cover birth control or Plan B. Pregnant women are allowed only one ultrasound, and newborns may be subject to the annual deductible for their care. — *Wal-Mart 2005 Associate Guide*, pages 50-64

SNAPSHOTS:

Wal-Mart pulled T-shirts from its shelves that read "Some-day a Woman Will be President" off its shelves, calling the shirt "offensive" and "against Wal-Mart's family values."

— *Associated Press*, 9/22/95

On a business trip, a female store manager, along with several male executives, was forced to stop at a strip club.

"Although I had never been in a place like this and had no interest in being there, I had no choice but to stay because I did not have my own car."

— *Dukes v. Wal-Mart*, walmartclass.com



"Men are here to make a career and women aren't. Retail is for housewives who just need to earn extra money."

— *Wal-Mart Personnel Manager Ramona Scott* recounting comments by male store manager.

Source: *Dukes v. Wal-Mart*, walmartclass.com

ABOUT WAL-MART WATCH

Along with over 300 supporting organizations, Wal-Mart Watch is sponsoring Higher Expectations Week to highlight our campaign to reform Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart Watch is committed to uncovering the true impacts of Wal-Mart's business practices on our economy, environment and culture. We aim to make Wal-Mart a more responsible company by informing, motivating and supporting the work of consumers, workers, community activists and elected officials who, together, will demand reform in their hometown. Join us at www.walmartwatch.com/november.



SOJOURNERS

BRAVE NEW FILMS

*A small sample of our national and local partners.

WHAT YOU CAN DO!

LEARN THE FACTS: What does Wal-Mart cost you? Visit our website www.walmartwatch.com to find out.

SPEAK OUT: Tell your friends and family about the negative impact of Wal-Mart's business model.

ORGANIZE: Join the growing movement to hold Wal-Mart accountable for their greed and destructive impact on our communities, economy and culture.

WAL-MARTWATCH

1730 M Street NW, Suite 601 • Washington DC 20036 • WalmartWatch.com

Newcomb says Wal-Mart rides on taxpayers' backs

The Idaho Statesman, 6/29/05

By Dan Popkey

Anxiety about depressed wages and affection for a home-grown success story could make pro-business Idaho the unlikely scene of an attack on the biggest company in the world.

House Speaker Bruce Newcomb is making noise about taking on Wal-Mart because he thinks the company relies on taxpayer subsidies to support underpaid workers. A bill that would have taxed Wal-Mart for what lawmakers said were substandard health plans was vetoed May 19 by Maryland Gov. Robert Ehrlich, who had Wal-Mart's chief operating officer at his side for the veto ceremony.

Newcomb, who helped Albertsons win a key tax break this year, said he's looking at the Maryland bill for two reasons: The fiscal impact on Idaho and what he sees as an issue of fairness to companies like Albertsons, which pay far more generous wages and benefits.

"Wal-Mart's blowing people out of the water, and if they're doing that by having the public sector subsidize their health care, that's wrong," Newcomb said. "That's really wrong."

Newcomb, R-Burley, said he will ask the Department of Health and Welfare to study Wal-Mart workers' share of Medicaid. Such figures are not now available for Idaho. Wal-Mart employs 6,400 workers at 18 stores in Idaho. The average hourly wage for a full-time "associate" is \$9.20 per hour, the company says.

Data from other states suggests sloughing costs of health care, housing and other expenses to taxpayers is part of Wal-Mart's low-cost strategy.

In Georgia, Wal-Mart workers disproportionately take advantage of PeachCare, the state health insurance program for kids. For every four Wal-Mart workers, one dependent child was enrolled in PeachCare in 2002, or 10,261 of the 166,000 children covered. Wal-Mart's rival, Publix Supermarkets, enrolled one dependent for every 22 workers, according to the state.

"That's not random," Newcomb said. "That's because of some kind of policy within the company."

The PBS program "Now with Bill Moyers," reported Wal-Mart provides new workers with toll-free numbers to determine eligibility for public benefits.

Wal-Mart denies encouraging workers to get on the dole. In a May 18 letter to Newcomb, Joe Kefauver, director of state government relations for Wal-Mart, said the company has been unfairly targeted by grocery employee unions.

"Please be assured that we do not encourage the use of public assistance, and we do not structure our plans with the idea that there will be a governmental safety net," Kefauver wrote, adding that more than 500,000 of its 1.2 million workers buy company health plans, which begin at \$155 a month for a family.

But Wal-Mart's plans are less generous than competitors'. Wal-Mart says it spends \$3,100 per year on medical benefits per employee, well below the average of \$4,400 for large retailers, according to Mercer Human Resource Consulting. Wal-Mart workers pay about one-third of the cost of premiums, while employees of the typical Fortune 500 company pay one-fifth.

Shameless

Introduction

Does America Need A Wal-Mart On Every Street Corner? Wal-Mart Thinks So.

As the world's largest corporation, Wal-Mart – with billions in its deep pockets and an insatiable need for growth – behaves shamelessly in the way it forces itself on American communities. Its aggressive bullying of American communities occurs because Wal-Mart's growth is central to its business model; it has to grow to sustain its profits, \$10 billion in 2004 alone.

Analysts have noted that Wal-Mart's growth efforts are nothing short of a "massive undertaking." In 2005 alone, Wal-Mart is striving to increase its retail space by approximately 8.4 percent. That amounts to approximately 250 new Supercenters, 45 discount stores, 30 Neighborhood Markets, and 40 Sam's Clubs on top of its more than 3,600 existing U.S. stores. "We think there's an extraordinary amount of growth ahead of us," Wal-Mart CEO Lee

Scott has promised.¹ But the reality is that the ongoing public education efforts about Wal-Mart's business model have made its growth more difficult to achieve.²

WAL-MART WATCH SPECIAL REPORTS

Click here to read more special reports on Wal-Mart's harmful business practices.

To Grow, How Low Will Wal-Mart Go?

This special report reviews Wal-Mart's bullying tactics through a series of local case studies. Using highly publicized examples like Inglewood, California and Chicago, Illinois alongside lesser known stories from cities like Stoughton, Wisconsin and Lewiston, Maine, the findings reveal patterns: Wal-Mart's use of local front groups, their reliance on a SWAT team of corporate mouthpieces, aggressive litigation tactics, outright bait-and-switches, and a trail of broken promises. Today, as more American communities rise to fight back against the retail giant, this report offers a strategic map of the company's tactics.

The Carrot...

The low prices offered by Wal-Mart are used as the enticing carrot to

local communities, along with a promise of new jobs and decent wages. Wal-Mart Watch has previously revealed the truth behind those claims. In particular, we have revealed the hidden costs in Wal-Mart's low prices: devastated small towns, bankrupt local small businesses, drained taxpayers, strained public programs, and endless pressure on competitors to replicate lowest common denominator employment practices.

...And The Stick

It is the stick Wal-Mart wields that is the focus of this report. As a local councilman in Wisconsin remarked during his town's fight to keep Wal-Mart out, the company's pressure tactics amounted to "corporate terrorism". Case studies, relying on myriad primary sources like campaign finance reports and Wal-Mart's correspondence, illustrate the company's heavy-handed tactics and the threats made to opponents who resist their efforts.

To be sure, when Wal-Mart has grossly overstepped, they've been called out for it. In particular, we chronicle Wal-Mart's public relations debacle in Flagstaff, Arizona. There, the company was roundly condemned for a newspaper ad placed by its local front group, which used Nazi imagery in denigrating its local opponents. Its other efforts do not always generate such national headlines yet are equally worthy of careful scrutiny.

In his book, "The United States of Wal-Mart," author John Dicker concludes, "As long as we remain blind to those consequences [of Wal-Mart's practices], we will also remain blind to the costs we pay..."³ Wal-Mart Watch, in its mission to reveal the full effect of Wal-Mart's business practices, dedicates this report to growing numbers of local groups and citizens who are recognizing the harmful consequences of Wal-Mart's victories.

This report is a tool for those who share our belief that the power of this wealthy corporation can be put to better use, and that American communities must be allowed to decide for themselves how best to sustain their vibrant economies.

WalMart Watch. com/home/pages/bully_report

Continued at WalMartWatch.org

WAL★MART

Q
WAL-MART STORES, INC.
CORPORATE OFFICES
702 S.W. 8TH ST.
BENTONVILLE, AR 72716
(479) 204-9038

Letter To Cleveland, Ohio City Council President

February 28, 2005

Council President Frank Jackson
City Hall
601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 220
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Dear President Jackson:

This letter is to notify you that Wal-Mart has decided not to build a discount store in the Steelyard Commons project in Cleveland. As you know, we have had discussions with the property owner but had not yet signed a contract for property in that development.

We are notifying you of our decision because we are aware of the perception in Cleveland that our plans were more definitive than they actually were. We were in the process of evaluating the site and had not internally agreed that this was an appropriate site for a Wal-Mart store. After weighing the various circumstances surrounding this site, we have made a business decision not to move forward. This decision is based on many factors.

➤ We also are aware of efforts in Cleveland to draft an ordinance that would restrict "combination stores" within the city limits. We want to assure you that this draft legislation was not a factor in our decision to decline to participate in the Steelyard Commons project. However, Wal-Mart still believes it is not good public policy for a community such as Cleveland to place restrictions on a very specific type of retail development.

In the future, we may explore other options to open a retail store in Cleveland. Meanwhile, we appreciate the efforts you have made to resolve prior legislation that would have placed an even greater restriction on our options for future development in Cleveland. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Keith Morris

Keith Morris
Senior Manager, Community Affairs
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

cc: Brent Larkin and Doug Clifton, The Plain Dealer

✓
Dear Mayor and Council,

1/19/06

Thank you for your obvious concern for community input. The timing of the meeting at Randolph school was difficult for the Montford Neighborhood Association to be present to due to our board's schedule (we met the following week). We have completed a community survey. We would like to share the results of our survey with you.

The highlights of concerns were:

crime

traffic

& development (inside, and adjacent to, the Montford Historic District)

crime:

Breaking& Entering, important to note that we have recently lost our neighborhood substation.

traffic:

volume, speed, four way stops for traffic calming...

development:

chamber, campus crest, health adventure

Specifically our concerns at this time are for the impact of the Health Adventure, and the traffic from the 'doorstep development' on the borders of the district. These developments further the need for traffic to be calmed, via four way stops, to maintain the qualities that make Montford so attractive to live, work, and enjoy.

Our neighborhood association is interested in furthering the appreciation of our historic district in balance with the needs of asheville's continued growth. We look forward to being part of the dialogue between the city and their constituent neighborhoods.

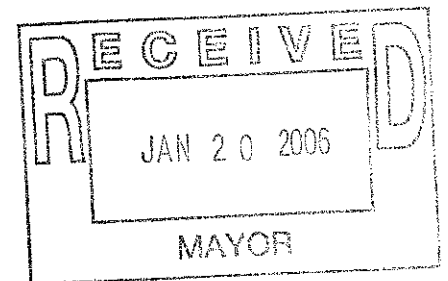
We appreciate your asking for our input, and we are very pleased by this new council and mayor asking for input from neighborhood associations and citizens like us.

Sincerely,

Nathan Boniske

President of The Montford Neighborhood Association

ashevillerolfer@charter.net



Janet Rhodes

From: Terry Bellamy
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2006 11:46 AM
To: Janet Rhodes
Subject: FW: response from public forum notice
Attachments: Water Authority Recommendations.doc; Goals for Asheville for 2006.doc; a new year's resolution...; Regional Transportation Draft.doc; Public input forum.doc

Please develop me a comment file.

From: Robin Cape [mailto:rcape@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2006 10:22 PM
To: Terry Bellamy; Holly Jones; brownie newman; Jan Davis; bryan freeborn; DrMumpower@aol.com
Cc: Gary Jackson; Lauren Bradley
Subject: response from public forum notice

Folks,

Here are the compiled input of the emails I have received this week in response to the notification of the forum. These people are ones who will not be able to attend but wanted to pass on their ideas.

Robin Cape
rcape@charter.net
www.robinforasheville.com
30 Hickory Street
Asheville NC 28804
828 251 2304 home
828 216 4009 cell

Janet Rhodes

From: Terry Bellamy
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2006 11:46 AM
To: 'Robin Cape'
Cc: Janet Rhodes
Subject: RE: public comment

Thank you for the information. I am keeping track (via Janet) of the comments that I receive.

Terry

From: Robin Cape [mailto:rcape@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2006 10:32 PM
To: Terry Bellamy
Subject: Fw: public comment

Terry,

As soon as I sent out the last email this one came it...thought I pass it on to you, too.

Robin Cape

rcape@charter.net

www.robinforasheville.com

30 Hickory Street

Asheville NC 28804

828 251 2304 home

828 216 4009 cell

----- Original Message -----

From: Lotte Meyerson

To: Mayor Terry Bellamy ; Holly Jones ; Robin Cape ; Jan Davis ; Bryan Freeborn ; Carl Mumpower ; Brownie Newman

Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2006 10:09 PM

Subject: public comment

Dear City Council members:

Since I'm unable to attend your public comment meeting tomorrow, I want to express my thoughts this way.

1. I hope you will find a way to keep Wal-Mart out of West Asheville -- or any other place in the city. I wrote you about that on January 4 (and I appreciate the answers from several of you), so I won't repeat myself here.

2. I hope also that you will consider enacting a living wage ordinance for, to start with, the employees of city contractors. This will begin to deal with the generally low wage level in this area and the resultant degree of poverty. Experience elsewhere has shown that it does not increase costs to the city, because of reduced staff turnover and other factors. You will be hearing more about this.

Thanks for listening.

Lotte Meyerson

43 Vernon Ct, A1

Clean, affordable water is integral to our region's physical and economic health, and the Water Authority exists for the sole purpose of providing it. Here is a proposal for a simple, straightforward, and nonpartisan approach to fulfill that purpose. For it to work, all those involved must agree to negotiate in good faith toward a common goal: an efficient system that collects, treats, and delivers high-quality water at fair and equitable rates for all users.

Any issue that distracts from that goal is irrelevant and, worse, counterproductive, and should not be allowed at the negotiating table. Among the side issues that must be dropped include the question of City "ownership" of the system, a temptation to keep it under City control by keeping its employees on the City's payroll, and some residents' antagonism toward planning for future growth and development. The rule for negotiations should be: *If it's not germane to delivering clean, affordable water, don't even bring it up.*

The Water Authority is, simply, a public infrastructure that exists to serve its users. It collects rainfall and runoff from far outside the City limits. It operates treatment plants in Buncombe and Henderson Counties, and it serves both Asheville residents and tens of thousands who live outside the City. Our water system is already a regional operation, and to carry out its mission it must be truly independent.

The City should push for local and state legislation to be enacted to create a truly independent Regional Water Authority. The RWA should have a nine-member board, with the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and Henderson County each having one appointment. Three more members should be voted on by customers – residential, business, and institutional – on the basis of "one water bill, one vote," ensuring that the votes and voices of a few big industrial users don't outweigh those of 70,000 residential customers. (This voting could be done through a public election, as in Woodfin, or in conjunction with the billing process, as is done by stockholders in publicly traded corporations.) Those six members would then appoint three more, from among any citizens who apply, by a 2/3 majority vote of the other members. A minimum of four votes would thus be required for each of these appointments.

Then, move the RWA out of City Hall and give it full control over its infrastructure, employees, and revenue, as well as legal ownership of and responsibility for all assets. (Some assets will be valuable, like the treatment plants; others, including many of the ancient clay pipes, virtually worthless.) The RWA board will set rates, which could include reasonable differentials based on the cost of delivery. These differentials might include 1) distance, which would impact Buncombe and Henderson County residents; 2) terrain – for example, the need for additional pumping on exclusive mountaintop developments; and 3) volume (a discount for efficiency of delivery to large users balanced by a premium for high usage of limited resources). Like any business, the RWA should incorporate into its rate structure a way to pay for capital improvements.

Two immediate benefits will come into play under this proposal. First, the City of Asheville will no longer be required to pay for road repairs following water line work,

saving several million dollars a year. Second, an independent, nonprofit public utility will be free to apply for grants to rebuild and maintain the infrastructure without having to walk the political tightrope of balancing the (often legitimate) conflicting needs of local governments. Additionally, citizens would enjoy access to clean water in an atmosphere free of the political rancor and personal bitterness that have brought us to this impasse.

It might also be valuable to establish a Water Advisory Commission to ensure that the voices of a wide variety of interest groups are heard (but have no legal weight). Appointments might be made by such organizations as the Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods, the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, CIBO, Citizens for Property Rights, Asheville Home Builders Association, Asheville Board of Realtors, Citizens for Safe Drinking Water and Air, and others.

END

Goals for Asheville for 2006-07

Random thoughts from Andy Reed

Improve what's good

- Environment
- Creativity
- Downtown

Fix what's wrong

- Housing costs
- Mega-development
- Inequalities

Asheville has a lot going for it as a livable city: beautiful setting, compact size, thriving creative community, diverse and exciting downtown, and other features. All these are underpinned by its strong sense of place: that Asheville is special, both in reality (so many people choosing to live here) and in reputation (all those magazine ratings).

Council should approach every decision in the context of whether a change will add to that reality or diminish it, including its environment, air, water, cleanliness, etc.

Among the factors that diminish Asheville's livability are housing costs and the tendency of the long-established power structure to run roughshod over rules and regulations they don't like and to keep "outsiders" out of the loop on decision-making (often done behind closed doors). Council should strengthen the affordable housing subsidy fund and every reasonable incentive to build more housing that is not gated, McMansion-style, or condominiums in the half-million dollar price range. Council should also open wide the doors to people who aren't part of the establishment – open them not only during public meetings, as is always done, but to seats on task forces and committees and work sessions. Traditionally Council has paid lip-service to the voices of the people; make Council's willingness to listen a reality by hearing what the people say (just as the public made its voice heard in the election that put you in office).

Here are thoughts on three big issues:

Revising the UDO

- make it a statement of Asheville's identity
- simplify and clarify rules
- use common sense (like allowing drive-throughs along the Merrimon corridor)
- include height restrictions: keep new construction from ruining views from existing buildings, keep the city's skyline in mind
- incorporate aesthetic standards
 - hold those who build steel & glass strictly to guidelines
 - offer incentives for creative design, such as easing of height restrictions, etc.
- envision the future impact of development plans – five, ten, 20, 50 years down the road

Civic Center

MAKE A DECISION! This will require leadership. Get Charles Worley OFF the Civic Center commission – he is the single most obstructive force against making a decision and moving forward. It makes no difference whether the building is renovated, sold, destroyed and replaced, turned into a convention center or business emporium, or if a new civic center is built elsewhere. DO SOMETHING. Set an absolute deadline for reports, analyses, and recommendations (I would say June 30, if not before). Then make a choice and move ahead.

Water Authority

Give up this “ownership” bullshit. The water system is a regional asset and a regional burden. Everyone connected to public water lines is invested in it, literally and figuratively (homeowners pay the cost of connections to their homes, and taxpayers pay for system expansion). During all the years that Asheville has “owned” it, the City has refused to maintain, upgrade, repair or improve the system except during emergencies; instead it has used revenues for expansion and for other, unrelated services. The idea of finding a “buyer” for it that will then run it as a profit center for Asheville, which is how Worley envisions it, is ridiculous. The city is not a business, and even if it were (or were run like one) any business owner knows that you have to have a good product, reasonable pricing, reliable maintenance of inventory and supplies, and competition to thrive. Water lines run under private property, public city and county property, state property, and everywhere else. It must be made independent and accountable. Follow the guidelines suggested in my op-ed last spring (attached document).

Janet Rhodes

From: Bud Howell [bud@riseup.net]
Sent: Sunday, January 08, 2006 11:35 AM
Subject: a new year's resolution...

Friends,

Following is Atlanta's resolution on the USA PATRIOT Act (thanks for the tip, BT). I think it is among the best I've seen, and might serve as a good model for Asheville. In my opinion, the key argument that needs to be made to the progressive members of the Asheville City Council is that unlike resolutions concerning other controversial national issues such as the war or the death penalty, this is something we may actually be able to affect at the local level as far as the city disallowing funding for unconstitutional law enforcement activities allowed under the USA PATRIOT Act. Asheville is an activist town, and I think that a resolution protecting civil rights and privacies is perhaps today more important than ever. If interested, please consider contacting City Council and let them know you believe that a local resolution against the USA PATRIOT Act would be more than symbolic, well in order and important to the health of our democracy and the rights of over 70,000 people.

BH

City Councilors' e-mail addresses:
mayorbellamy@ashevillenc.gov
hollyj@buncombe.main.nc.us
rcape@charter.net
jandavis@main.nc.us
freeborn@main.nc.us
drmumpower@aol.com
bnewman@main.nc.us

Atlanta's Resolution to Protect Civil Liberties

Date Passed: 01/05/04

A Resolution for the Protection of Citizens' Liberties and Civil Liberties; Instructing the Atlanta/Fulton County Library Board and the City Attorney to Submit Certain Information to the City Bi-Annually; and for Other Purposes: 03-R-1970

Approved by: Atlanta City Council

WHEREAS, the City of Atlanta is proud of its long and distinguished tradition of protecting the civil rights and liberties of its residents; and

WHEREAS, federal, state and local governments should protect the public from terrorist attacks such as those that occurred on September 11, 2001, but should do so in a rational and deliberative fashion to ensure that any new security measure enhances public safety without impairing constitutional rights or infringing on civil liberties; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Atlanta believes that there is no inherent conflict between national security and the preservation of liberty --Americans can be both safe and free; and

WHEREAS, certain federal policies adopted since September 11, 2001, including provisions in the USA PATRIOT Act (Public Law 107-56) and related executive orders, regulations and actions present a threat to fundamental rights and civil liberties; and

WHEREAS, these new powers pose a particular threat to the civil rights and liberties of the residents of our city who are Arab, Muslim or of South Asian descent; and

WHEREAS, many other communities throughout the country have enacted resolutions reaffirming support for civil rights and civil liberties in the face of government

policies that threaten these values, and demanding accountability from law enforcement agencies regarding their use of these new powers; and

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Atlanta City Council affirms its strong support for fundamental constitutional rights and its opposition to federal measures that infringe on civil liberties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Atlanta City Council affirms its strong support for the rights of immigrants and opposes measures that single out individuals for legal scrutiny or enforcement activity based on their country of origin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Atlanta City Council urges and requests that the Mayor direct the City of Atlanta Police Department to:

- Refrain from enforcement of federal immigration laws, unless such enforcement directly relates to a criminal act.
- Refrain from engaging in the surveillance of individuals or groups of individuals based solely on their participation in First Amendment protected activities.
- Refrain, whether acting alone or with federal or state law enforcement officers, from collecting or maintaining information about the political, religious or social views, associations or activities of any individual or group unless such information directly relates to a criminal investigation, or such individual or group has a documented criminal record.
- Refrain from undertaking or participating in any initiative, such as the Terrorism Information and Prevention System (TIPS), that encourages members of the general public to spy on their neighbors, colleagues or customers.
- Refrain from the practice of stopping drivers or pedestrians for the sole purpose of scrutinizing their identification documents without particularized suspicion of criminal activity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Atlanta City Council requests the Director of the Atlanta-Fulton County Library Commission notify and warn all library users that their personal library records may be obtained by the federal government under the USA PATRIOT Act.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Atlanta City council directs the City Attorney to transmit it the Atlanta City Council no less than once every six (6) months a summary of information obtained by the Atlanta Police Department pursuant to the USA PATRIOT ACT (Public Law 107-56), and based on such information and any other relevant information, an assessment of the effect of federal anti-terrorism efforts on Atlanta residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Atlanta City Council directs the Municipal Clerk transmit a copy of this resolution to all members of Georgia's Congressional delegation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Clerk transmit a copy of this resolution to Governor Sonny Per due and Attorney General Thurbert Baker, and appropriate members of the State Legislature, accompanied by a letter urging them to ensure that state anti-terrorism laws and policies be implemented in a manner that does not infringe on citizens' civil rights and liberties.

Community Group / Coalition: Atlanta Bill of Rights Defense Committee

Contact Information:
atlantabordc@yahoo.com

DRAFT

Moving People in 2006 or “Why we need new Regional Transportation options”

By Robert Eidus, a Transportation Consultant

Growth in the Asheville and Hendersonville metropolitan areas is a hot topic. One of the main components of Growth and Land Use planning is “Transportation” and all of its various elements. In our area the road network has been long established. The professional advisors for the highways and transit of the Asheville area live and work in the flat lands of the Research Triangle and Charlotte. In the 1980’s an out-of-touch highway department in Raleigh put an Interstate highway through rather than around the City of Asheville. Does anyone remember the “cut” of Beaucatcher Mountain debate?

The Federal decision to subsidize the auto and highway interests for the single passenger automobile, and aviation facilities for the corporate traveler, has been plodding along successfully for the last fifty plus years. In fact it’s been so successful that the projections for 2006 is that single occupancy auto trips will account for 95% of all car trips. Given the outlook for oil reserves in the world, not to mention the cost of gasoline, this 95% figure is clearly unsustainable and undesirable by most Americans. The current analysis by the Texas Transportation Institute indicates that the urban highway systems in all major cities do not work. As a local NCDOT engineer in District #13 said to me, “we realize now, we can not build our way out of this situation with more and wider roads”.

So, what is our new mandate from Raleigh to overcome this situation, a regional transit coordination effort and a consolidation of County human service van transit? This is a good place to start but transit and van coordination is something that should have been done all along. Although we have all moved into the 21st Century this type of regional transportation planning is part of the previous century. We in the Asheville area need a 21st century plan for the movement of people in and around our area, with the maximum number of vehicle options, which is environmentally friendly, and energy efficient for the numbers of people moved in one day.

Two local organizations in the Asheville area, the Land-of-Sky regional planning organization, (RPO) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) have both hired one new personnel each to look at the issue of alternatives to the single occupant automobile. We should all applaud the recognition the something different needs to done. However, we are still working in the old paradigm. Unfortunately, the system is broken. All indications are that the ban-aids by both the State and locals will be too little too late.

Historically, urban areas have created Regional Transportation Authorities when the traffic crisis is so bad fixed rail systems are then planned and built years after the need has been reached. Can we get ahead of this curve?

The current Director of North Carolina’s Public Transportation Division, Marion Perry, has the authority and power to fund a meaningful Regional Transportation Study. This study could look into different modes of transportation and the technological innovations that can improve the movement of people. It could study the type of authority needed

and innovations, like centralized dispatch and a “no cash on board” system. It could look at the right-of-ways at Interstate intersections for car pooling lots with more small buses, vans and taxis coordinated to ‘pulse” in downtown Asheville and other nodes.

Ms. Perry is not convinced that our area is committed to looking at regional transportation planning through a regional transportation study. Even though the WNC Alliance, the Canary Coalition, and the Southern Environmental Law Center have sent her letters of support for a regional transportation study, Ms Perry has not responded. For those in our area who like me think a regional transportation study should be taken on by our NCDOT, please write her at 1550 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1550.

- Tom Herman has been the only NCDOT no-highway personal assigned to the mountains and he can be reached at (828) 251-6078. Mr. Herman is in charge of the human service vans that are funded by the Federal Government, as well as the new transit person in the mountains.

Robert Eidus, a Transportation consultant with SECL was a NCDOT Transportation Consultant for all mountain Counties and the City of Asheville for eight years. He resides in Asheville.

Public comments submitted for council via email for contribution to the public forum on Thursday Jan 12.

I would like to see Asheville High look like it is a school that makes the top 100 list. Pans are put in the hallways to catch water when it rains, the upstairs auditorium has peeling paint all on the walls. An important film for city and school officials to see is "Kilowatt Ours"; school districts in Tenn. have switched to geothermal heating and save thousands each year in energy costs.

Also, I would like to see Asheville lead the way in green planning. In San Francisco, a bond was passed to retrofit all public buildings and the energy savings will pay for the bond. Make city cars and buses to be hybrids and/or boideisel. A great resource for planning is A PATTERN LANGUAGE by Christopher Alexander . Linda Panullo

I would like to see Asheville High look like it is a school that makes the top 100 list. Pans are put in the hallways to catch water when it rains, the upstairs auditorium has peeling paint all on the walls. An important film for city and school officials to see is "Kilowatt Ours"; school districts in Tenn. have switched to geothermal heating and save thousands each year in energy costs.

Also, I would like to see Asheville lead the way in green planning. In San Francisco, a bond was passed to retrofit all public buildings and the energy savings will pay for the bond. Make city cars and buses to be hybrids and/or boideisel. A great resource for planning is A PATTERN LANGUAGE by Christopher Alexander .

As a voter who lives in Haw Creek, I would like to suggest that Asheville obtain more sidewalks. It is hard for me to suggest to my overweight and obese children and adults to walk more if they don't have a place to walk.

Blake Fagan,118 Weaver Blvd,Asheville NC 28804,828-258-0670

As a citizen of Asheville and a devout mountain biker, I would like to express my grave disappointment and strong opposition to the city's plans for development at Richmond Hill. Again, I would like to remind several of the city council members of their commitment to "smart growth" and the preservation of green spaces. Given this, why are you willing to support the destruction of the largest green space the city owns?

I would like to see the City place a higher priority on sidewalks, greenways, and energy conserving systems (e.g., mass transit). I would like to be able to walk, run, or bike all across town without feeling threaten by automobiles. Larry Fincher

I am so pleased that the city council is having this goal setting meeting.I'm not sure if this is a usual thing for city council. I've not heard of it before but I am not terribly involved either.Anyway, it sound like a very proactive approach and I'm proud to think of our city council as progressive.I am sure that this meeting will be packed. I was wondering if this meeting will be video taped and maybe available for viewing in other venues?Possibly on that channel that shows the city council meetings?Where might I get info regarding this?

Since Asheville is growing and changing so rapidly, I would like to see the council or who ever, maybe a new committee, who is getting informed about town planning and good growth. The growth could be a great opportunity for our city. Mimi Strang

I don't think I can make this meeting. I think a goal should be to establish greening of Asheville strategies. We have a lot going already with alternative fuel vehicles, over 800 acres of parks, lots of local food outlets, improved Asheville transit including bikes racks, clean water and some good greenways. I think energy use/ conservation and green power generation should be looked at as a way to both cut our polluting and our energy costs and dependency. Renewable energy and conservation produces good jobs as well as clean energy. Boone Guyton

Slow down the growth of building in Asheville, the roads are too crowded and the water system and sewage system are on overload. If Asheville keeps building and building without improving the current infrastructure we are going to be in deep trouble.

Also, building on top of ridges in Asheville city should not be allowed. The city council needs to immediately put a moratorium on that. People live, visit and move here for our beautiful landscape not for buildings!

Slow down taxes in the city, we pay city taxes (ready to skyrocket), we pay county taxes and we pay a city school tax. They are getting out of hand. My husband and I already pay \$2400 per year for our house currently valued at \$235,000. We originally paid \$25,000 for our house on two acres in 1985 and then added a \$60,000 addition in 1994. Bringing our home's value to about \$100,000. I shudder to think what the taxes are going to go up to since the price of homes in Asheville have skyrocketed. It's great for sellers but we would like to live here for a long time but may not be able to afford the taxes when we retire! I believe Asheville residents are tired of paying for parking garages and new roads such as College st. (which will be a disaster when the parking garage behind the health dept. is completed---900 cars converging onto the now-one way street all at 5pm!!) and the new round-a-bout with higher and higher taxes! enough is enough!

The utilities are also going up and up! The middle income people (like us) and the lower income folks of the city of Asheville are hardest hit and suffer the most from the high utilities and taxes. Salaries are not going up to meet these needs. Blessings, Cheryl Orengo

For City Council Public Meeting, I would like to suggest the issue of highly visible public restrooms in the Downtown, something I think has been a notable omission for some years. Yes, there are issues of cost, maintenance, and patrol, and if you want to find a reason not to have such a facility you can. But, a number of cities in New England have such human friendly resources. And you don't need to go any further than Black Mountain (Cherry Street), to find a facility that Asheville would do well to emulate. Cities with a heart and human scale attractiveness have easily accessible public restrooms.~ Cheers, James Sheeler

1. Pass a Living Wage Ordinance
2. Restore Minimum Housing Code Enforcement
3. Get Serious about Getting Green.
4. Equal Domestic Partner Benefits to all City Employees
5. Promote Affordable Housing by Implementing Inclusionary Zoning.
6. Protect Constitutional and Civil Rights
7. Support Local Businesses: Limit Big Box Development with Size Caps and Economic Impact Reviews.
8. Tax Tourists with a Fair-Share Hotel Occupancy Tax
9. Take a Stand for Public Health and Safety: Make Asheville a Nuclear-Free Zone.
10. Change the Rules regarding filling vacant council seats. Beth Trigg

Hopefully the Council members will look after those of us who are Asheville natives and pay taxes to the city, county, and school; which seem to me to be very unfair for those of us who live in the city and are retired and on a fixed income. Most of us have a very small savings and it seems unfair that we have to spend them on these higher property taxes. I don't mind paying my city taxes but the county does nothing for me, nor do the schools. There are those of us who were born here and need not to be taxed out of our homes

Also I resent my tax money going for all these supposedly art pieces up town when our streets, sidewalks, etc., are in dire need of repair.

It is a shame that the water dispute cannot be resolved without spending our tax money to sue the county.

Also the city of Asheville should get a portion of the room tax that the tourist pay as they come here and use our facilities and all the room tax goes to promote more tourism

Also the Civic Center should be run by an independent firm, not the city of Asheville as it has been a loser for the city

Thank you. Mary Winner 16 Castle Street

I would like to ask you to add to the agenda a genuine concern for the traffic flow in West Asheville; particularly that on Michigan Avenue. There have been MANY accidents involving both vehicle and pedestrian at the intersection of Montana & Michigan avenues. There is only a two way stop at this intersection and no speed bumps to regulate speed. Even the city bus zooms past our house at a speed much too fast for residential traffic. My neighborhood is also very concerned about the traffic patterns on Haywood Road and the lack of pedestrian/ bicycle acknowledgment. I, personally, have been involved in a bicycle versus truck accident on Haywood just near the exchange. There has been one "cross- walk" painted onto the eastern side of Haywood with no accompanying light or signage. The overall traffic on the west end of town is frightening for cyclists, pedestrian and drivers. I feel if we increase the signage & in some way increased pedestrian/bicycle awareness, things would flow much more smoothly. Emilee Rose

Hello. I would like to let you know I think making all public places in the city of Asheville smoke-free is a very important issue. I know some bars and restaurants feel that this would cost them money. However, I know there are many people, like myself, who do not visit these bars because it's so smokey and unhealthy. And, almost 40,000 non-smokers die in America each year from exposure to this kind of smoke. I would also be open to considering support for a measure that ensures these kind of places install adequate ventilation to effectively remove the smoke. Thank you. Karen Cuthbertson Asheville City Resident for 12 years

I know this is not new information to any of you, but is this what we want for Asheville and Buncombe County? Much of it is already happening -sprawl - and it seems to be spiraling out of control. How can we work together to halt ... or at least attempt to slow it to a crawl? Our historic and exquisite mountains deserve to be protected ... and so do the citizens. Really, folks ... how many shopping centers and strip malls do we need? Why can't we be the ones to set a higher standard for development and become a model city/county ... one that has the guts to take a stand and protect what is really valuable to us ... because once it's gone ... **IT'S GONE!** Elaine Lite

As environmental planners, our company works very hard to protect our region's forests, farms, streams, natural and cultural heritage. I believe that infill development within the City of Asheville is vital to securing a high quality regional environment and the ecosystem services that it provides. But I see too much NIMBYism that is getting in the way of infill development. One example is the uproar over the most recently proposed parking deck in downtown Asheville. My office is downtown. We employ 9 persons. We struggled for months to find dedicated parking for our company employees. The situation is still tenuous. Another example is the uproar over the housing development in Kenilworth. If council appeals to populist sentiments over the next four years instead of making wise decisions based on the larger interest of the City, I am fearful that Asheville will become known as an anti-business environment. And as we all know, good stable businesses are the cornerstone upon which other civic services are built. Without business, you have no jobs. Without jobs, you have no people. Without people, jobs, and business you have no tax base upon which to develop and implement important public services.

Please don't misunderstand me. I do believe that these two projects I provide as examples did have some problems. But that is where good planning and good design comes into play. Please be a councilwoman who looks thoroughly at a project and how good design might overcome popular antagonism BEFORE shooting down such projects.

Thank you for your ear. Andy Brown, President & Environmental Planner

(W.A.N.A.):

We hope to turn back the multi-family zoning of much of West Asheville given the inability of the City Council and associated parties (Planning Department) to work with the citizens. Related to the 1st item, please investigate how citizens comments can be more 'weighted' (in other words, get attended to rather than ignored) re: the blatant disregard for the 7 UDO beginning at the level of the Technical Review committee, stopping off briefly at the Planning and Zoning meeting, and then, simply checked off by the City Council members regardless of how many citizens evidence disapproval of said project. Marsha Hammond

Please mention our concern at next Thursday's City Council Meeting regarding All-Safe Towing Company's business ethics and possibly of its "unfair business ethics" utilized daily. I hate to see Asheville get a bad reputation due to one dishonest business/individual. Randy in Georgia

Here are a few of my ideas about areas that should be emphasized during the next few years:

- 1) Sustainability and environmental issues
- 2) Fair wages
- 3) Big box store restrictions
- 4) Urban planning
- 5) Disaster preparedness
- 6) Sign restrictions and other beautification programs
- 7) Innovative transportation ideas Tip Kilby

Upon coming out of the YWCA this am I became aware that I now live in STAPLES NC. I can not believe that sign on their building as viewed from 240 , I truly believe that anyone driving into town would have to think they were in Staples NC. I believe in progress and commercial development but it looks like total disregard for the community to me.

Mike Lamb

47 Stonebridge Drive

I will not be able to attend the meeting on the 12th, but wanted to express my hope that the Council will look at ways to support the local food movement in Asheville. We have a vibrant small scale farm economy all around Asheville, and the city itself has a few thousand residents who vote with their dollars every week to purchase locally grown and processed foods. I recently did a research project on the economic impacts of tailgate markets in the region. My findings indicate that in the four tailgate markets located in the city, over two thousand people shop weekly from May to October, spending approximately \$25,000 weekly in purchases direct from area farmers. In addition, Asheville retailers and distributors including Greenlife Grocery, French Broad Food Co-op, Mountain Foods, and the Grove Arcade Market make a concerted effort to provide local foods to our citizens.

Since 2002, I have supported the development of Blue Ridge Food Ventures, a 12,000 sq foot shared-use food processing center located at the AB Tech Enka Campus (and inside the City Limits). The project opened in February 2005 with a \$1.2 million investment from private foundations and public entities, including Golden Leaf Foundation, Z. Smith Reynolds, Progress Energy, and the NC Rural Center. To date, more than 20 small businesses have used the facility to manufacture a wide range of food products, including fresh-cut local vegetables, baked goods, jams and jellies, trout pate, apple cider, and many more specialty foods. Our target is that by early 2008 the project will support creation of more than 35 jobs with an output of over \$1 million annually.

Right now the project has secured funding for operations until September 2006. Our plan from the beginning has been to support current account operations with external support during the first three years of operations, after which it will be a break-even operation from user fees. Short and simple, the project needs an additional \$180,000 in support to carry it to February 2008. I would be delighted if you and your colleagues could consider ways to help support this project. Attached in .pdf is a flier explaining the project in more detail. Smithson Mills 273-9119

Thanks for the info re. the input meeting on Jan. 12. I have several things I would like to bring up at that meeting such as: 1) Retaining Asheville's identity in spite of all the development, 2) the I-240 plan 3) Transportation in Asheville and Buncombe. Hope to see you there. Va Boyle

I especially hope you will work toward making the city a more beautiful place by adding flowers, etc., and keeping our town cleaner. Asheville has one great asset that is ignored. It is the Municipal Golf Course. I play there and have the opportunity to visit with locals and guests. The green space is wonderful and certainly could use some beautification touches. The course has historical significance and is a great place to enjoy the game for all levels of economic status. I cannot think of a better place to get a good value for your money and get some fresh air and exercise. (It would be good to promote Asheville as being noted for being physically fit and healthy.) It is my wish that you take some time to study municipal golf courses. Greensboro has a great public course.

Thanks for any attention given to the subject. You have a tough job, good luck in all that you do. Kindly, Betty Ann Lackey, Sarasota, Fl. Winter resident

I committed to be somewhere else this night and can't attend. I hope to be at the next one. Keep me posted.

But as to what I see as important to discuss are the following; Strong controls on development - Height restrictions, proper locations, multi use, preserving the beauty and charm of our town, affordable housing. Next would be expanding mass transit. Get all city vehicles on Bio-fuels. STOP the next Sprawl-Mart. I certainly hope Holly will not support it. I will be watching closely ya'll's actions. Clean air and water are on my list too. Preserving and expanding open spaces. How about a new park? Maybe in a disadvantaged neighborhood. More sidewalks and bike paths.

Council must adhere to open meetings regulations. And frankly expand them. No backroom deals. Hold businesses accountable to the conditions stated in their permits.

On a side issue, how can I get speed bumps put in on my street. The traffic in front of my house goes WAY TO FAST. Even the bus. Best wishes, Stephen

WHAT DISTURBS ME MOST IS THE FACT SO MUCH DRINKING IS ALLOWED ON THE STREETS IN ASHEVILLE. NEW YEARS EVE IS NO EXCUSE TO ALLOW THIS, NOR IS THE BELE CHERE EVENT. I LIKE A DRINK OR TWO BUT DO NOT APPROVE OF PUBLIC DRUNKENESS WHICH IS RAMPANT IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA. Pat Wells

Quit talking about it and do something with the Civic Center. Ideally strike a deal with the county plus Hendersonville, if possible, to get them to share the burden even if it means moving it from downtown Asheville. How about a corporate sponsor such as the NFL uses then we could have the Sprint, Verizon, Gatorade, V8 or Beverly-Hanks Performing Arts Center or whatever works.

Remove all vehicular traffic from downtown Patton Ave., say from the area of the W. parking barn to Pack Place. Look at what Denver, CO; Biloxi, MS; Stockholm, Sweden and so on have accomplished by creating urban pedestrian ways free of autos. Tom Beatty

I will not be able to attend this first meeting, but appreciate the opportunity to offer input. My greatest concerns for the future of Asheville include the need for bike lanes, walking trails and more accessible public transit. I would like to see our city and school busses running on biodiesel, especially since we have blueridgebiofuels right here in Asheville. Granted it all takes work.

Please let me know when the work begins, I have education in planning/recreation resource administration and would love to see this get rolling.

Linda Welsh

Simply stated ... I'm frustrated ... and I'm worried about the direction the city has taken in the recent past. One of the biggest issues I see is development within the city ... particularly the downtown area.

For example: (1) initial approval of the Grove Park Inn project near Pack Square (thank goodness for loud, protesting voices) (2) **the monolith of a building on Merrimon Ave. across from Greenlife that will be a Staples?** who approved (3) the space on Battery Park Ave. where the old JC Penney building was ... (in my opinion) the structure is way out of place on that small street ... it overwhelms everything else! (4) Potential disaster in planning for the Deal site on Merrimon ... who knows what they have planned for that "valuable" piece of real estate. I've heard condos and MORE shopping! Need I go on?

It's ironic to me that they implement a strict sign ordinance for reasons of aesthetics, but allow construction of buildings that are so out of character with our area to move forward.

As a passionate, long-time resident and business owner, I'm concerned about who is making these decisions and what the motivations are. Why can't the city and city council be more demanding in their standards? Why can't they implement stricter guidelines and be more selective in terms of structural design of new projects ... and just say no when something is so obviously out of synch? I cannot accept a growing business tax base as the only rationale ... not at the expense of the character of our city and the glorious beauty of our mountains and surrounding neighborhoods.

When will politicians and planners wake up and realize that the natural beauty of our mountains is the **key** to our survival ... both environmentally and economically ... not how many strip malls, skyscrapers and housing developments we build. At this rate ... in 5 years, there will be no mountain views or trees left and no reason for tourists to come see the unique beauty of the city we all love. We will be a clone of any other city that has allowed development to go unchecked ... we will have lost our soul.

I would love the opportunity to meet with you and discuss what other options can be implemented for development of city spaces that would conserve the heart and soul of the city - while allowing for moderate growth. I know it's possible ... other areas have succeeded in higher standards ... thoughtful planning is required ... but it can be done.

Thanks for your time ... and good luck in your efforts,

Elaine Lite